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WITH J. WILLEY'S COMPLIMENTS.

BROOKLANDS.

SEVEN YEARS AGO.

THE STORY OF A CANADIAN
TOWN.

LLOYDMINSTER.

NORTH WESTERN TERRITORY.

[From the "LONDON DAILY NEWS."]

SEVEN YEARS AGO.

The Story of a Canadian Town.

(BY ARTHUR E. COPPING.)

Lloydminster, Oct 2

During March, 1903, the Rev. I. M. Barr, assisted by the Rev. G. E. Lloyd, founded a British colony in Canada at 14, Sergeant's Inn, London, E.C. Every adult male was to have his free grant of 160 acres, under sanction of the Canadian Government, in the beautiful and fertile Saskatchewan Valley. The whole thing was arranged in advance with a masterly regard for detail. Mr Barr even provided a scheme of medical insurance, with the use of a hospital and trained nurses, on the basis of a small annual subscription. In a word, the prospectus was a pressing invitation to the promised land, and some 1,500 names were enthusiastically enrolled.

There was a flaw in the scheme. The colony was established 200 miles from the nearest railroad! Thus those English families, after voyaging across the Atlantic and travelling two-thirds across the continent, were faced by two terrible problems. First, how to get to their land; secondly, how to live when they had got there.

At great expense—for kites are attracted by a drove of pigeons—many procured horses, oxen and waggons for the

long trek over the rough ground, which for the most part had been left black and desolate by recent prairie fires. A number of those poor immigrants expended the last of their scanty savings on food for the journey. Some tramped wearily on foot. Purged of the faint-hearted few (who would not leave Battleford and civilization), that noble procession of resolute men, staunch women, and plucky children passed on to their goal. It proved nothing but a beautiful wilderness.

And there at first they lived in tents—the men in some, the women and children in others, representatives of both sexes taking night watches in rotation to feed the fires that held timber-wolves and prairie dogs at bay. Poor Barr colonists! They were isolated from the world. They were a society without the machinery of existence. One is tempted to emphasise their plight with the grim suggestion drawn from the realm of historic irony. Their one possible means of livelihood was to take in each other's washing

TO-DAY!

I am writing in one of the fine hotels of the prosperous town of Lloydminster, which has its own weekly newspaper, six places of worship, two banks, two large schools, a range of Government offices, three grain elevators, several musical societies and athletic clubs, and a large electric plant that illuminates its broad thoroughfares. Also I am writing at the place where, seven years ago, only those tents were standing. For in their fight against fate, the Barr colonists won. They have built themselves this town, and to-day they are rich, contented and triumphant. ~~The ease~~ of Lloydminster has no parallel, I believe, in the history of modern Canada, full as that history is of romance and of swift and amazing developments.

I spoke to Mr. Johnson, the butcher. "Ah," he recalled, "Mr. Barr arrived with only two beasts, and I had the killing of both. I bought one carcase and retailed it. The last pound of flank was soon gone, and for days I walked to and fro, pondering the stubborn problem—where could I get some meat? One day from nowhere there arrived a wandering, wondering Indian. I gave him my full attention. He had picked up a few English words from Hudson Bay men. But we communicated mainly by signs and the end of it was that I set off with him on a long journey to the north. He had understood! We came to a place where there was a herd of cattle. I bought a steer, the Indian produced a rig, and we brought my beast back in triumph. I decided to reward the Indian at the the rate of two cents per lb. He was satisfied with this payment, and in a few days, when that meat was all gone, we went off to fetch another carcase. So the supply was kept up. Soon I had built a little hut—our first butcher's shop."

Meanwhile some of the men had gone out with guns and shot wild ducks and prairie chickens. Others, establishing themselves as merchants of the community, drove back to Battleford and returned with waggon-loads of provisions. Some fetched timber, so that a beginning could be made with building operations. The women and children set about growing vegetables. A number of the men journeyed some hundreds of miles away to work for wages.

I spoke to Dr. Amos. "Nothing," he explained, "came of Mr. Barr's medical scheme. At least, members presented their subscription cards, but the hospital and nurses proved as theoretical as my salary. Of course we all helped one another, and monetary considerations scarcely existed. My work was constant and pretty monotonous—every day I was

stitching up axe wounds! You see in those days the men were strangers to that most useful tool."

THE MYSTERY OF MR. BARR.

Quite early the Official affairs of the community were found to be in an unsatisfactory tangle. Mr. Barr abruptly departed. Some say he was unfortunate in his advisers. Others explain that, alarmed at the plight in which he had unwittingly involved his trustful following, he lost his nerve. Concerning that pathetic figure, the rest is silence. Whither he went, and whether he be alive or dead no one seems to know. The case of Mr. Lloyd is different. He stood by the colony, sharing the stress of those early days, and the name of this town is a memorial of the affectionate regard in which he is held. As the principal of Emmanuel College, Saskatoon, Archdeacon Lloyd is now detained by duties elsewhere; and thus I have not had the pleasure of meeting a remarkable man of whom Canada has cause to be proud. But here in the centre of the town I have looked upon the little "log-cabin" church—so picturesque without, so restful within—that he built. At least, he and all the others built it jointly. For nearly every colonist assisted according to his or her ability—some contributing a three-dollar log, some a two-dollar log. And already—the needs of the community having outgrown the accommodation of that little pioneer edifice—a stately brick and stone church, costing ten thousand dollars, is arising to gladden the heart of Lloyminster's popular rector, the Rev. C. Carruthers.

THE COMING OF THE RAILWAY.

An early beginning was made with the growing of grain, primitive means being available for grinding it. At last the news came that, miles and miles away, the railway line was

approaching. Thus was opened up the new community's first out-side market. For the railway gangs were prepared to buy oats for their horses at a high price. The Canadian Northern Company pushed on the work with all possible speed, incidentally providing, in the construction of the road, a welcome outlet for Lloydminster labour. The people here tell me that the most beautiful music they ever heard was the whistle of the first approaching tram. When the great locomotive appeared in sight, the Barr Colonists sang and wept for joy. The days of tribulation were over—the era of prosperity had dawned.

I strolled into the suburbs of the town, and, passing through a pretty garden with its inviting tennis court, I entered a charming bungalow. For I had a fancy to see Miriam, the first child born at Lloydminster. And that merry little girl, who will soon be seven years old, introduced me to her dollies and her great big Teddy bear. From the juvenile prattle, confirmed and elucidated by a delightful mother, I learnt that, under the terms of a picturesque Dominion statute, the Government have just granted Miriam a valuable town site in Lloydminster—birthright of the first native inhabitant.

LATE OF WOOLWICH

I drove out to see Mr. Hill and his family, who came from Woolwich. Since there are three grown sons, the joint estate is a square mile of rich land, beautifully wooded here and there, and enclosing two lovely lakes. The youngest boy was herding their large "bunch" of horses and cows, his brothers were harvesting the wide expanses of wheat and oats, and the old man was keeping an eye on his twenty score of hogs.

"Yes, yes," chuckled Mr. Hill "my oats scored 95.5 out

of possible 100 at Brandon Winter Fair, averaging 86 bushels to the acre and 50 lbs. to the bushel. Not bad eh? for an old Cockney who, until he came out here, had never done any farming? But those early days! You cannot imagine what we went through. If only we could have got out of it, how gladly would we have done so! But all our little savings had gone. We were penniless, and had to hold on. And now," he laughed, "how profoundly thankful we all are that we did so. Mind! It has meant work, work, work. But the reward is abundant." And indeed, taking improved land at its lowest local value, the Hill estate is worth £3,200, a sum that takes no account of Mr. Hill's herds and houses and machinery. But since his annual revenue from grain alone is well over £1,000, he would not dream of selling out.

And Mr. Hill is but one of the numerous Barr colonists prospering on the land in the district. One was a costermonger in the old country; two of his neighbours are University graduates. Lloydminster men have taken twenty-seven prizes for grain at the Regina, Edmonton, and Calgary fairs during the past six months. Last year the Lloydminster men bought agricultural machinery to the value of 155,000 dollars, or approximately, £31,000.

Thus we see that Canada pours forth her immeasurable wealth to those who will till and toil. Englishmen who come to "town jobs" in this country are on a footing remote from that factor. Ere I write about them, I wish—for the greater accuracy in handling an important subject—to focus facts I am collecting on a town extending by alternative routes from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back. Meanwhile it remains to be said that the desire of Lloydminster is for more people to come out and work on the land, and thereby help to populate the district, and swell the general volume of prosperity. And I have heard the same thing said in every district I have visited.